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DRAFT
AMENDMENT 1
Program Description for USAID/Russia Assistance to Russian Orphans 2

Issue Date: April 9, 2002
Extended Closing Date: May 15, 2002
Closing Time: 5 PM Moscow Time

SUBJECT: Draft Program Description for USAID/Russia Assistance to Russian Orphans 2

Ladies/Gentlemen:

THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR APPLICATION: USAID/Russia is preparing for issuance of a Request for Application (PFA) for the for the subject program. USAID is soliciting comments from interested parties, in order to further refine this Draft Program Description (DPD). This procurement will be a full and open competition. Your comments will be appreciated and considered as we finalize the proposed cooperative agreement. No information on pricing, competition, instructions to offerors or evaluation criteria is available at this time.

Answers to questions will be posted in the solicitation (applicants will not be identified with the question). Comments may or may not be incorporated in the Program description. Comments will be accepted until April 22, 2002, 5 PM Moscow Time. All comments shall be addressed to Alexander Borzov, Senior Acquisition Specialist in writing (e-mail preferred: aborzov@usaid.gov), fax: 095-960-2140, or by mail addressed: 19/23, Novinsky Boulevard, Moscow 121099, Russia.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Gary Juste
Agreement Officer
USAID/Russia

Summary: This Draft Program Description provides technical content of a proposed four year, $8 million cooperative agreement planned for Russia addressing the area of child welfare reform. It builds on the successes of USAID/Russia's current Assistance to Russian Orphans program. It is divided into the following sections:

   I. Background
   II. Development Challenges
   III. The Proposed Activity

I.   Background

Since 1992, USAID, in coordination with other international donors, has played a facilitative role in Russian-led reforms in different sectors, including the social sector and civil society. A number of USAID-funded programs have had a direct, positive impact on the quality of life of Russian people. At all times, one of the key principles underlying USAID/Russia's response has been an appropriate adjustment of programs and approaches to the current economic and social context in the country to better meet the urgent demand for change.

An unprecedented growth in the number of children outside family care remains one of the major social challenges facing Russia in its transition. Although accurate data on children outside of family care are not available, Vice Governor on Social Affairs Valentina Matvienko estimates that the number of children in this situation is as high as one million. Despite President Putin's focus on the demographic crisis in Russia and the Russian Government's demands to cherish each child, over the last decade the numbers of children abandoned to the State and given up to the system for one reason or another has increased dramatically. Although many studies indicate the linkage between economic pressures and decisions to relinquish children to State care, creating the large class of "social orphans" (children with a remaining living parent who nonetheless are not being raised in a family setting), the underlying factors include deeper social issues related to a lack of support systems for families at risk of disintegration and resulting abandonment.

To assist Russia in its efforts to address the escalating problem of social orphans USAID/Russia launched in late 1999 its Assistance to Russian Orphans (ARO) program. Findings from an external evaluation conducted in November 2001, confirm ARO's strategy to promote long-term child welfare reform in Russia through support to model initiatives developed by Russian non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To quote from the report:

> The team found that the ARO programs, as implemented by the USAID cooperating partners Holt International (ARO/W) and Mercy Corps (ARO/E) are addressing the USAID following objectives: (1) To introduce innovative approaches to reform the Russian system of child welfare; (2) To serve as a model for reforming Russian state institutions for children by retraining state child welfare staff; and (3) To expand the networking capacity of the ARO subgrantee NGOs.

> Most, if not all, of the child welfare services developed by the USAID sponsored sub-grantee NGOs, such as community-based support services to foster families, development programs

for children with mental disabilities in boarding schools, mainstreaming of children with learning disabilities in community schools, and numerous other socially innovative programs described in this evaluation, did not exist in any form in Russia prior to the USAID ARO program.

Since 1999, ARO has served an estimated ten thousand children and almost seven thousand families. More than one hundred projects have been implemented by 83 organizations in 32 cities of 24 regions. Innovative child welfare models, aimed at abandonment prevention, promotion of family care, and social adaptation of orphans graduating from institutions, have been developed and implemented, primarily by Russian NGOs, but often in partnership with local government counterparts. In addition, a number of state institutions and local administrations Russia-wide are adopting new child welfare policies and practices developed by NGOs in the program.

Considering the complexity and magnitude of the problem, coupled with the time required in addressing similar challenges in the U.S. and other Western countries, USAID/Russia has decided to continue to support the emerging process of child welfare reform in Russia by launching a follow-on phase to the Assistance to Russian Orphans program (ARO) (referred to here as "ARO2") which will emphasize proactive abandonment prevention activities as critical efforts to reverse the trend toward the growth in the number of abandoned children.

This decision was based on USAID's three years of experience under ARO and analysis of the developments in the sector since 1999. Both clearly demonstrate that the maximum impact on family preservation is achieved through early identification and preventive interventions in the most vulnerable families, including socially disadvantaged families and families with special needs children. In addition, the Russian government and other international donors currently focus more attention and resources on promotion of family care alternatives and social adaptation of older orphans. Thus, abandonment prevention remains the biggest challenge to be addressed in child welfare.

While state support will remain essential for at least the next decade, the government and society recognize an increasing role for the non-governmental sector in the provision of social services. As captured in the ARO evaluation these organizations demonstrate greater creativity and flexibility in developing new models. Therefore, ARO2 will continue to focus support to NGOs, although certain efforts also will target governmental service providers.

All activities under this program will contribute to the achievement of USAID/Russia's new Strategic Objective 3.2: "Increased Use of Improved Health and Child Welfare Practices," supporting in particular the Intermediate Result 4: "New Child Abandonment Prevention Models Implemented."

The purpose of the proposed activity is to further facilitate child welfare reform to improve the situation of orphans in Russia. The purpose will be achieved through fostering local child welfare initiatives aimed at abandonment prevention and de-institutionalization; dissemination of best practices in child welfare services; promotion of changes in public attitudes towards child abandonment; and social policy improvements.

II.   Development Challenges

For almost eight decades in Russia, the public's attitude and the State's approach to care for abandoned children have been dominated by institutionalization. According to estimates of Russian and international child welfare experts, only 20%-30% of young adults graduating from orphanages integrate normally into communities. Others commit crime, suicide, prostitution, abuse alcohol and drugs with the resulting high costs to themselves and society. During the mid-nineties, through the efforts of children's rights activists and international donors and organizations, a body of knowledge was amassed about the situation in Russian institutions and the detrimental effect on children of such institutionalisation. As a result of this increasing momentum for reform, much of it initiated in the regions, Russia has begun to seek alternatives to state care.

Nonetheless, despite a significant bureaucracy and increased investments, during the past decade the number of orphans has continued to increase (see Annex 1). An analysis of the underlying factors that contribute to abandonment indicate many of the needed interventions and reforms.

Although the data suggest that economic factors (such as the crisis of 1998) contribute to abandonment, experts acknowledge that a multitude of factors other than poverty lead to "families in crisis," placing children at high risk of abandonment. Factors such as substance abuse (narcotics or alcohol), domestic violence, and other linked issues contribute to child abandonment. An approach that removes the child without addressing the root causes, without considering the family itself, ultimately will not reduce abandonment. Moreover, considerable evidence exists that orphans in adulthood often replicate the same practices and abandon their children in turn.

Literature on the subject and experts agree that the lack of a system of early identification of children living crisis, needs assessment in crisis families and provision of targeted psychological assistance to vulnerable groups are basic factors underlying this situation. Social institutions that are supposed to implement abandonment prevention programs often limit their functions by instead providing humanitarian aid.

Children with disabilities or special needs are also at high risk of institutionalization. The lack of evidence-based health criteria for institutionalization of newborns, coupled with a lack of awareness among maternity hospital staff of modern developmental methodologies, often results in institutionalization (in baby homes) of infants with severe birth defects/health conditions. The Russian state-run system to support children with such disabilities (e.g. mental disorders, autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, etc.) reflects a preference for institution-based care. A system of social services at the community level to provide practical or psychological assistance is underdeveloped, and, for many parents, institutionalization of children remains their only option.

Although family care as an alternative to institutionalization is not a new concept in Russia, and some innovative and effective models of substitute families have been developed and tested during recent years, de-institutionalization efforts (which include promotion of, for example, foster care, placement in group homes, and guardianship arrangements with extended family members) and family placements often are impeded by various factors. These include the resistance of local administrations and orphanages' staff; a lack of psychological, social and legal family support services; the absence of trained staff to provide

these services in governmental and non-governmental sectors; and the lack of implementation mechanisms at the local level.

Social work and family psychology and counseling were virtually non-existent prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union and still remain poorly developed fields. Often, child welfare specialists lack practical skills and policy-makers lack sufficient information on innovative models, including those related to abandonment prevention practices and family care alternatives, which have been proven to be effective in Russia.

The following constraints in the governmental and non-profit or non-governmental sectors make child welfare reform work even more challenging:

- Weak links and limited coordination between different government departments, namely health, education and social development;
- NGOs are not sufficiently trained to operate at a professional level; weak institutional development, lack of advocacy skills (especially with regards to children's rights), weak networking among NGOs and partnership links with local governments;
- Little effort has been devoted at any level to education for the general public on the negative impact of institutionalization on children and new family care alternatives (foster families, "patronat" families, etc.);
- Although a number of national laws have been developed recently that provide a general framework to support the family as the best environment for a child, regional legislation often constitutes an actual barrier to the promotion of new abandonment prevention practices and new alternatives to institutionalization such as foster care.

III. The Proposed Activity

USAID/Russia envisions that ARO2 will build upon the major accomplishments of ARO's first phase to further promote child abandonment prevention and de-institutionalisation. To build on the established successes, priorities will include:

- ➢ ensuring continuous progress and sustainability of local/regional initiatives to prevent child abandonment and promote de-institutionalisation;
- ➢ disseminating successful child welfare approaches and practices;
- ➢ increasing public education and awareness; and
- ➢ maintaining a broad policy dialogue at all levels of the Russian society.

USAID/Russia acknowledges that child welfare reform is a long-term process. In the United States and Western European countries such as Great Britain, it took 20 to 30 years to create an effective system of orphans' prevention. It is expected that in its follow-on phase ARO will continue to play its role as a "catalyst" for ongoing child welfare reform in Russia, and in this role will achieve certain milestones or outcomes testifying to the appropriateness of this approach.

A. Technical Areas and Target Groups

In its follow-on phase, the Assistance to Russian Orphans program will continue to support activities in four technical areas:

- Abandonment prevention among children in high-risk groups including children with special needs;
- Family-based alternatives to institutionalisation including new models such as foster families and "patronat" families;
- Social adaptation of orphans leaving governmental care;
- Legislation and children's rights protection.

As stated above, abandonment prevention efforts will receive an increased emphasis to develop a response to the underlying causes of the growing numbers of social orphans. It is assumed that abandonment prevention activities will target two major groups - families and children in crisis and families with children with special needs - and will range from development of counseling services, social and legal support services, crisis intervention services to rehabilitation and family preservation programs. The role of the health care sector (maternity hospitals/pre-natal care centers, baby homes, children's hospitals, women's consultations) in abandonment prevention will be enhanced through programs for high risk groups to prevent abandonment of newborns, promote early intervention services, changes in functions of medico-psychological-pedagogical commissions, etc.

The ARO program will not support international adoptions, humanitarian assistance or pure research.

The target groups under ARO2 are the following:

- Families in crisis (dysfunctional families);
- Families with children with special needs that are at high risk of abandonment;
- Orphans in state-run institutions who need life skills to reintegrate successfully into communities;
- All institutionalised children (who represent the target for de-institutionalisation interventions).

B.   Objectives

USAID/Russia has identified three specific objectives to be achieved in ARO2:

- **Development of local/regional child welfare initiatives through enhanced NGO professional and institutional development, dissemination of child welfare best practices, increased networking and strengthening social partnerships between NGOs, the governmental and private sectors;**

- **Promotion of changes in public attitudes towards child abandonment through increased public education and information dissemination;**

- **Pursuance of systemic policy changes through enhanced child welfare advocacy, a broad policy dialogue at all levels, and the promotion of new abandonment prevention policies and strategies.**

It is anticipated that the Applicant will propose creative and innovative approaches to implement the program that accordingly should have three major components.

i. *Fostering local/regional child welfare initiatives:*

Based on the success of this component initiated under ARO1, this element will be a centerpiece of ARO2. The complexity and the magnitude of the problem call for locally-based strategies and solutions that involve all stakeholders in the development process and for enhanced inter- and intra-regional cooperation between voluntary organizations, public and private agencies, local administrations and businesses.

Under this component, efforts and resources will be concentrated in the regions to disseminate best practices in child welfare service delivery and facilitate development and implementation of local and regional cooperative initiatives aimed at abandonment prevention. As noted by the ARO Evaluation, a greater emphasis should be placed on "better documentation of the models developed by ARO NGOs to promote dissemination of information to state agencies as well as to other NGOs who want to pursue projects in child welfare reform." It is expected that the regional work will provide for the creation of an inventory of successful Russian regional abandonment prevention strategies and models that will contribute to national child welfare reform. Development of a "multiplier mechanism to spread the models to other NGOs, state institutions and government agencies" was considered by the ARO Evaluation team as a crucial issue, and should be addressed in ARO2.

ARO2 will provide essential leadership and guidance, facilitating joint initiatives in priority regions. A systemic approach will be pursued in order to optimize regional change in child welfare systems and ensure sustainability of successful regional models. A strategy of work in each region should be developed and coordinated with the regional authorities. As the ARO Evaluation team suggested, "ARO should continue to increase its efforts to demonstrate to government agencies the value of integrated, continuous services that meet the needs of individual children (introduction of a case method is a valuable step in meeting this need)." Ensuring Russian ownership of the planned interventions will be valued as a key feature of the regional work.

Capacity related to the developing field of social work and family counseling will need to be addressed. ARO2 will provide innovative approaches to strengthen the ability of Russian universities, established social workers, NGOs, and local authorities to deliver enhanced social work services. Technical assistance and training models developed under ARO1 include TA provided by strong Russian child welfare NGOs, formal workshops and seminars provided by Russian and international experts, local internships and international study tours, the link with the Social Department of the Far East University, Regional Educational Program aimed at upgrading professional skills of non-governmental and governmental service providers, etc. The ARO Evaluation recommended that ARO2 promote "clinical practice, as it is taught in Western countries," with an emphasis on casework.

Increased networking, sharing innovations and learning about innovations introduced by others should be one of the major components of ARO2. A variety of sharing mechanisms can be used, including conferences and other networking events, as well as maintenance of websites created under ARO1.

Given the size of the country and resource limitations, USAID/Russia has determined that ARO2 will be implemented primarily in a select group of focus regions. These regions have been identified based on the geographic focus of USAID/Russia's amended country strategy, as well as ARO-specific criteria, including:

- the status and progress of related regional efforts achieved to date under ARO;
- the potential or opportunity for replication Russia-wide;
- the ability of local NGOs to absorb innovations and promote child welfare reform; and
- reform-minded local governments.

The focus regions for ARO2 will include:

1. Siberia: Tomsk oblast;
2. The Russian Far East: Khabarovskii Krai, Sakhlin Island, Primorskii Krai and Magadan;
3. Western Russia: Novgorod oblast;
4. The Volga Federal District.

Some activities might be located in Moscow and St. Petersburg, where key Russian governmental and non-governmental institutions are based that will be instrumental to achieving impact at the country level. Locations in other regions might be eligible for consideration as an ARO2 project site if either a measurable impact could be achieved within a reasonable time period in a cost-effective manner, or a proposed model ultimately could merit national replication. The Applicant will be expected to justify such selections in its application and to demonstrate knowledge of the child welfare situation in such regions, the potential to develop relations with local key stakeholders, and/or innovative approaches to regional work and best practices dissemination.

This component will be deemed successful if, at the end of the program, a range of effective Russian models of child abandonment prevention will have been introduced to NGOs, state institutions and government agencies; if specialists are created in non-governmental and governmental sectors able to provide high quality child welfare services, disseminate successful models and make increased use of lessons learned; if NGOs are viewed by the public and government as competent child care service providers; if mechanisms are established that help to develop a coherent framework and learning environment for implementation and dissemination of child welfare innovations as well as to create a platform for joint action of all actors; and if social (non-government-to-government) partnerships are created and strengthened. After the four years of ARO2, the Program should have led in the priority regions to the development and implementation of a comprehensive, broad-based approach linking stakeholders in a reform-oriented process. The NGOs will continue to provide imperative for innovative change, while leveraging the government's resources and drawing on the government's infrastructure.

ii. Promotion of changes in public attitudes towards child abandonment:

The ARO Evaluation emphasized the "strong need to increase public awareness of child abandonment and social adaptation issues." It is anticipated that public education and information dissemination activities will contribute to the greater engagement of mass media in child welfare problems. Such channels ultimately will increase awareness of the scale of and emerging solutions to the orphans' problems in Russia. Public education will indicate the emerging opportunities to improve the lives of hundreds of vulnerable children; gain greater public support for such new child welfare strategies; and mobilize communities to action. Community mobilization efforts could, for instance, provide incentives for

volunteerism; facilitate implementation of abandonment prevention through recruitment of foster families; and underscore the merits of local adoption.

This component will be deemed to be successful if a consensus on the need for child welfare reform particularly abandonment prevention as a priority for action is achieved. Policy-makers, child care givers and communities will be aware of successful abandonment prevention models adopted to Russian conditions; communities will provide increased support to new child welfare strategies, either through volunteer effort or through budgetary support, and there will be increased and more active citizen participation in resolving child welfare issues.

iii. *Pursuance of systemic policy changes:*

One of the important lessons from the ARO program was that early engagement of policy-makers into social initiatives helped to secure their support. Policy work under ARO2 should further support a "bottom up" process and facilitate adoption of successful local initiatives at all levels. Pilots established under ARO provide ample illustrations of successful models that could be leveraged to influence broader policy issues at the municipal, regional, and federal levels.

The ARO mid-term evaluation documented that, in fact, in a number of instances NGO-initiated and implemented activities served as a model for reforming state institutions. These activities had a range of impacts: on the institutionalised children, the staff managing and working in the institutions, and on governmental agencies and administrations. Under ARO2, USAID seeks to maintain and strengthen these impacts. It is anticipated that under ARO2 the state child welfare system will continue to change through the introduction of new ideas and practices developed by NGOs; that professional skills of institution staff will improve as a result of training provided to NGOs and their governmental counterparts; that new models will be further shared with state institutions; and that many of these institutions ultimately can be transformed from, for instance, orphanages into family support units.

Policy activities should therefore motivate government authorities to adopt innovative models and practices in state institutions developed by NGOs. These activities should provide support to the development of emerging community-based services by using a competitive procurement mechanism; promote improvement in child welfare laws and regulations; and ensure inclusion of child abandonment and orphan's rights issues in federal, regional and local social programs.

During the course of ARO2, one desired output is the strengthening of the capacity of Russian organizations to develop and pursue systemic policy work in this area. USAID has invested in the development of Russian think tanks in the economic sphere. ARO2 will provide a similar opportunity in the child welfare sector. Rather than devote resources to the provision of humanitarian aid, the ARO Evaluation team recommended "rather than increase the dependency of institutions upon external aid," USAID programs should provide "training to the institutions in fund raising skills."

The component will be deemed successful if NGOs advocate effectively for appropriate policy change; community stakeholders maintain a continuous policy dialogue on child abandonment issues; innovative abandonment prevention strategies are formulated at local/regional levels and adopted at the national level; state institutional procedures are

changed to introduce ARO demonstration models; NGO leaders (change agents), NGO coalitions and networks, public alliances and communities take the lead /play a visible role in child welfare reform; etc.

C. Implementation and Management Tools

Based on the success of the implementation strategies developed and applied under ARO, similar mechanisms will be anticipated under ARO2. These will consist of a grants making component, technical assistance (TA) and training (provided by the implementing organization, its partners, and/or consultants), non-governmental organization (NGO) strengthening and development efforts, and overall program monitoring and evaluation.

i. Grants making component

It is expected that sub-grants will be awarded to Russian and international NGOs to provide financial support to all program activities, including dissemination of child welfare models; TA and training (which may be separate from that provided by the Primary Recipient); regional development initiatives; networking strategies among stakeholders and implementing organizations; public education; grants for partnerships to Russian, U.S. and European organizations; and, policy work.

To implement the grants making component, the Primary Recipient should establish a Grant Review Committee and a process to advertise and solicit requests for grant applications. The Grant Review Committee should consist of independent experts on social work and NGO development, representatives of all child welfare sector key players including NGOs, government, international donors, and others; develop ethical standards for all participants in the selection process and a comprehensive set of eligibility requirements and selection criteria; and develop a fully transparent grant competition process. It is estimated that not less than 30% (TBD) of the ARO2 program's annual budget should be allocated to the grant program.

ii. Technical assistance and training

It is expected that TA and training will be implemented in three principal areas – professional development in social work and family psychology; dissemination and advocacy; and institutional and project development.

At the outset, training should be linked to an in-depth analysis of needs, motivation and readiness of trainees. TA and training should be based on diversified approaches dependent on the stage of organizational and professional development of NGOs or individual trainees. Related recommendations can be found in the ARO Evaluation.

The Primary Recipient should involve in TA and training activities not only organizations and participants directly involved in program implementation, but also, to the extent possible, their counterparts in government and the third sector whose awareness of the problem and support are crucial to implementation of changes in child welfare. Creation of specialists who can disseminate successful models and make increased use of lessons learned will contribute to the development of a "critical mass" of efforts necessary to pursue/achieve child welfare reform in Russia.

Methods of TA and training can vary, and may include consultancies, coaching/mentoring and supervision, internships, study tours, formal training including workshops and seminars, training-of-trainers approaches, etc. It is expected that the Primary Recipient will demonstrate creativity and flexibility in its selection of TA and training methods.

iii. NGO development issues

Although the Assistance to Russian Orphans program is designed to address primarily technical issues, some efforts should aim at strengthening NGO capacity and sustainability and increasing advocacy skills of non-governmental child care service providers. A set of recommendations on strengthening child welfare NGOs is provided in the report on the ARO mid-term evaluation. For example, one of the conclusions of the ARO Evaluation was that NGOs "cannot be fully effective without strong government links." The team recommended to "explore how to strengthen government linkages" and referred to a successful model developed by the ARO/East program: "attaching a key government worker, not paid by the project, to each NGO who takes part in all training that the NGO staff receives – and in turn promotes the project to regional and federal levels, might be useful model to use in many ARO projects." It is emphasized that TA and training activities to support organizational development of NGOs should be tailored to the needs and the capacity of related NGOs.

The Primary Recipient is encouraged to identify cost-effective approaches to meet these needs which might include use of the existing NGO Resource Centers in respective regions; cooperation with other USAID-funded programs, for example Sustaining Partnerships into the Next Century (SPAN) in the Volga Federal District, the RFE Civic Initiatives Program; and collaboration with other donors, for example the TACIS NGO development program in the RFE. Formal training provided by strong Russian NGOs and TA/mentoring to an NGO or group of selected NGOs are also applicable.

iv. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation activities should be developed to enable observation of the program's progress towards the established objectives; to ensure coordination between different program components and projects implemented in various geographic locations; to determine the need for direct methodological assistance; to provide control over the quality of the child care services provided; and to serve as a source of information for training needs.

The Primary Recipient should develop a program monitoring and evaluation plan. Proposed indicators should focus on measuring results or effects of interventions rather than on program inputs. The monitoring and evaluation plan should be instrumental in identifying program impact and clearly document program accomplishments and changes achieved during implementation of ARO2.

The Primary Recipient is expected also to encourage ARO sub-grantees to develop their own monitoring and evaluation plans. TA and training on developing indicators might be part of formal training on institutional development and project management, or provided to sub-grant recipients upon their request. It should be noted that the ARO Evaluation recommended that "ARO subgrantees should make an effort to interview the primary beneficiaries of their services, the children and parents, to better assess and collect data on their needs."

Indicators used in the ARO program's first phase are attached.

D. Synergies with Other USAID-supported Activities

It is anticipated that the ARO program will benefit from collaboration with other related USAID-funded programs.

Through various initiatives to promote civil society, USAID/Russia supports the efforts of Russian activists and organizations to resolve problems of disabled children, domestic violence, and trafficking of women and children, alcohol and drug abuse problems, legal rights of orphans and other vulnerable groups.

Under the Civic Initiatives Program, which covered Siberia, Southern Russia, Novgorod, and Samara oblasts and currently is expanded to the Russian Far East, 30 NGO Resource Centers have been created that promote NGO development and foster citizen participation and advocacy to influence government policy. The Local Governance program helped to improve local social service delivery by means-tested targeting of social benefits and competitive procurement among NGOs to provide community-based services.

Under USAID/Russia's health program, the health partnerships program managed by the American International Health Alliance has included an exchange of ideas and approaches on child welfare issues between American and Russian partners (for instance, in the Khabarovsk/Kentucky partnership). Under the Women and Infant Health Program, implemented in Novgorod and Perm by John Snow, Inc., restructured practices introduced in baby-friendly hospitals (such as exclusive breastfeeding) contribute to reduced abandonment of newborns. The Primary Recipient is expected to seek opportunities to work with other USAID implementers and beneficiaries to contribute jointly to USAID/Russia's goals and strategic objectives.

E. Coordination with Other Donors

Other donors are providing significant assistance on child welfare in Russia. USAID staff currently participates on a working group led by UNICEF, as well as conducting individual coordination efforts with donors active in the sector.

UNICEF: The United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) coordinates child welfare activities among government agencies, NGOs, and the donor community. The organization also seeks to promote policy change, fostering information and experience exchanges among regions where positive initiatives are underway.

UNICEF currently sponsors a two-year program of cooperation in Russia to promote new approaches and policies for protecting the rights of groups of vulnerable children. Two major areas of focus for UNICEF are prevention of child institutionalisation and support to and prevention of street children. Activities include development of alternatives forms of care for children who are deprived of parental rights or with disabilities, assessment of the situation of street children, provision of alternative education opportunities for street and working children, and the development of community-based rehabilitation models. In the past, UNICEF initiated and supported the establishment of Children's Ombudsmen in five regions; in early 2002 the Moscow City government created such a position to be funded by the

Moscow city budget. The Moscow Ombudsman considers the protection of orphans' rights a priority for action.

TACIS: The Technical Dissemination Project of the European Union (TACIS) funds a program to explore different aspects of public/private partnerships in the provision of care for children. One of its centerpieces is close collaboration with the federal ministries of education, social development and health to improve child welfare legislation.

CIDA: The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) supports the Canadian Center for Disability Studies, which works with local disability organizations, social service providers and educational institutions to support the active participation in society of disabled Russians to promote their rights.

DFID: The British Department for International Development (DFID) sponsors a program in Sverdlovsk oblast to introduce community-based services for children at risk of institutionalization and to increase public awareness of new policies and practices of family-focused social care.

OSI: The Open Society Institute (OSI) sponsors a grant program for Russian NGOs to develop services to disabled people. A grant has been provided to the Far East University to develop a resource centre on social issues with a focus on child welfare.

In addition, numerous orphanages have received various types of donations from international charitable organizations, and expatriate organizations, schools and individuals living in Russia. Such resources have been channelled through the American Red Cross, Russian NGOs such as Downside Up, private organizations and religious institutions.

The Primary Recipient is expected to coordinate closely with other donors engaged in the child welfare sector to avoid duplication of effort and multiply the effect of ARO2 program activities.